

Hospital in Kalamazoo, Michigan for providing outstanding health care to the residents of Southwestern Michigan. Bronson was recently honored with the 2005 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, which is our Nation's highest Presidential honor to commend quality and organizational performance excellence.

The 6 recipients of the Malcolm Baldrige Award were selected from a highly competitive field of 64 nation-wide applicants, which were rigorously evaluated by an independent board of examiners.

This prestigious award will come as no surprise to the folks of Southwestern Michigan who have for years relied upon the hard work and treatment provided by Bronson Methodist Hospital. There is nothing more important to us than our health and the health of our family members. I would like to thank Bronson Methodist Hospital for the continued quality service they provide our community and congratulate them once again for being recognized nationally for their hard work and dedication. We are truly fortunate to have such an exemplary hospital working for us in our corner of Southwest Michigan.

**TORTURE VICTIMS RELIEF
REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2005**

SPEECH OF

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 6, 2005

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, as the House stands poised to consider and pass H.R. 1717, the Torture Victims Relief Reauthorization Act of 2005 (TVRA), I want to express my strong support for this legislation. I am proud to be a cosponsor of H.R. 1717. I want to take this opportunity to recognize the efforts of Survivors of Torture, International (SURVIVORS) in my district of San Diego, California. SURVIVORS is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to caring for survivors of politically-motivated torture and their families who live in San Diego County.

San Diego is home to the busiest land border crossing in the world. According to conservative estimates based on International Red Cross Red Crescent Societies' extrapolations of the percentage of torture survivors among refugees from countries where the use of systematic torture is documented, approximately 11,000 torture survivors are living in San Diego County today. They are from countries where the use of systematic torture is documented, including countries in Africa, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America.

Since 1997, SURVIVORS has helped more than 500 torture survivors from more than 40 countries to recover from their traumas through a holistic program including medical, dental, psychiatric, psychological, legal and social services. SURVIVORS empowers torture survivors to reclaim the strength and vitality that were stolen from them by brutal dictators and governments. The specialized care SURVIVORS provides these vulnerable individuals helps them to become self-sufficient and healthy members of their families and of our community. SURVIVORS currently serves approximately 200 survivors of torture and their families in San Diego County.

Mr. Speaker, SURVIVORS works with refugees, asylees, asylum seekers, and immigrants who are survivors of torture. By working with this large population in San Diego County, SURVIVORS is strengthening the nation: many of its clients move to other communities in the United States after receiving the care and services necessary to successfully build a new life here. As SURVIVORS continues to work in the community, it receives an increasing number of referrals and requests for services each year. There is also a need to continue making services even more comprehensive.

The professional background of SURVIVORS' clients include: business, religious, government, and farm leaders; university students and educators; journalists; physicians and nurses. They are talented, trained, productive people who feel destroyed. Torturers today are able to create conditions which effectively break down the victim's personality, identity, and his/her ability to live a full life later. At SURVIVORS and groups like it across the nation, these individuals find help to begin reclaiming their lives.

The significant majority of SURVIVORS clients in San Diego suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Major Depressive Disorder, or both. The worst consequences of torture are psychological "sequelae." These are normal yet disabling reactions for ordinary people who have endured the extreme trauma of torture.

People are referred to programs like SURVIVORS through a variety of sources, including: religious and community-based social service organizations, refugee resettlement organizations, immigration attorneys, public health care providers, schools, individuals in the community, and other torture survivors.

Mr. Speaker, the TVRA provides funds for torture treatment centers in the U.S. through the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). Currently, 27 programs in 17 states receive assistance through ORR. The treatment provided by these programs enables survivors of torture to recover their lives and become productive members of their communities. Many of these centers also train mainstream organizations and personnel. This increases the ability of health care providers, schools and other institutions to provide for the special needs of torture victims and contribute to the prevention of torture.

Since 2000, SURVIVORS has received the bulk of its funding from TVRA through ORR; and almost two-thirds of SURVIVORS' current financial support is funded through an ORR grant. TVRA provides funds for foreign treatment centers through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). In some cases, direct investment by the U.S. in torture rehabilitation centers provides important political support and protection, especially when the local embassy, Members of Congress and other American leaders visit these centers. SURVIVORS also receives funding to provide technical assistance and build the capacity of NGOs in Mexico that provide services to survivors of torture.

Mr. Speaker, TVRA also authorizes a contribution to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (UNVFVT). Funding from the U.N. helps many centers feel more secure in the dangerous work of aiding torture survivors that a regime has identified as its enemies. The UNVFVT supports nearly 200 treatment programs spanning 70 countries, in-

cluding nearly all U.S. centers. This funding is also vital to groups like SURVIVORS for direct programs.

In conclusion Mr. Speaker, the TVRA is a vital piece of legislation which funds essential services for survivors of torture throughout the 53rd District of California and San Diego County, and enhances the standing and reputation by exporting America's values in the form of support for foreign treatment centers. I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill that is so important to so many.

**HONORING RETIRING CONCORD
TOWN COUNCILMAN JOHN ALLAN**

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor John Allan, whose service as a member of the Concord Town Board will come to an end on December 31, 2005.

Councilman Allan is a man dedicated to effective public service for the residents of the Town of Concord. Few public officials love their hometown the way John Allan does, and his public acts have always had the intention of making life in the town of Concord better for those fortunate enough to live there.

While John's most recent run for public office has proven unsuccessful, it is a virtual certainty that he will remain active in local civic affairs. That is a good thing, for the town of Concord is better for the active public service of individuals like John Allan.

I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for offering me this opportunity to honor the public service of retiring Concord Councilman John Allan, and I hope that you will join me in offering to Mr. Allan the House's best wishes of good luck and Godspeed in all of his future endeavors.

**U.S. MARINE LANCE CORPORAL
DAVID A. MENDEZ RUIZ**

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of United States Marine Corporal David A. Mendez Ruiz of Cleveland, Ohio, who bravely, honorably and selflessly heeded the call to duty and made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of our country.

Family, friends and service to others framed Corporal Ruiz's young life. He gained personal strength and faith from those who knew him best and loved him most, especially his father and mother, Maximiliano and Miriam; sisters and brothers, Sandra, Byron, Laura, Mynor, Zucely, Edgar and Nydia; grandmother, Elvia Ruiz; and his fifteen nieces and nephews.

Corporal Ruiz was born in Guatemala City, Guatemala, on May 26, 1985. In 1991, at the age of six, Corporal Ruiz and his family immigrated to the United States and settled in Cleveland, Ohio. He quickly assimilated to American culture; his easygoing nature and generous heart easily drew others to him. One